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Kurdistan Region of Iraq Builds Governance and Transparency

ERBIL, Kurdistan Region, Iraq, [13 July, 2009] - In a bold move to build both international and domestic confidence in the governing ability of the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq (KRG), Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani announced on July 12 a good governance and transparency strategy, developed in coordination with global consultancy PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). Compliant with the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, this move puts the KRG ahead of every regional government in the world and even several major democracies.

"The benefits of this strategy are clear and vital for our future. It will help to ensure that public funds are used properly, and make government more efficient and more effective. It will improve the delivery of services to the people of the Kurdistan Region. And it will help improve international and domestic confidence and increase investment and job development, while helping to raise the living standards of our Region," Prime Minister Barzani said at Council of Ministers Building in Erbil.

The Prime Minister spoke before a large crowd that included the Deputy Prime Minister, senior members of the Cabinet, key members of parliament, the top United States official in the region, and numerous members of the international press. Representatives from PwC also attended.

PwC Project Director George Prokop commented: "We congratulate the KRG on its bold efforts to strengthen and enhance existing measures as well as implement new reforms that put the KRG on a path to improving governance and transparency throughout government." PwC has worked with more than 150 countries, including almost every Middle East nation, advising governments and private sector clients.

The strategy announced today is based on four principles:

1. Adherence to the Rule of Law is Critical: To ensure that no one in government, regardless of position, is above the law.
2. Every KRG Official is Accountable: Officials must recognize that they have a legal duty and are accountable to act in the interests of the Kurdistan Region and its citizens, and will promote those interests above their own, their family or political party.

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3. Transparent Government Promotes Kurdistan: To provide citizens with access to information on the operations of government, which is indispensable to ensuring that KRG officials remain accountable to the voters.

4. Public Funds Must Always Be Used for Their Intended Purpose: The fundamental principle of economy and efficiency in government requires that public funds should only be used for the purposes for which they are appropriately and lawfully allocated.

The KRG hired PwC, the leading global professional services firm, to review current government structures and build the strategy. The more than 600 page strategy is believed to be the first that a regional government has undertaken to comply with the United Nations Conference Against Corruption. These efforts go beyond other emerging economies to strengthen and enhance existing measure as well as implementing new reforms that put the region on path to improving governance and attracting foreign investment.

For more information, please visit www.krg.org.

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